

CDBG Advisory Board Meeting

2/18/15

Members Present: Jen Powell, Russ Elek, Maleka Clarke, Ben Hatch, Tina Hubbard, Molly O'Brien, Ben ChasonSokol, Linda Chagnon, Jane Helmstetter, Martha Maksym (Ex-Officio Member)

Staff Present: Marcy Esbjerg, Max Webster (AmeriCorps Member)

Marcy initiated welcome and introductions. Introductions followed. Martha explained that she was representing the United Way as an Ex-Officio member. The United Way once had a position on the advisory board but now only serve as an adviser to guide the decision making process. Martha does not have a vote in the process.

Motion to approve the minutes from last meeting is made and seconded. Motion is approved.

Public Comments: There were none.

Marcy initiated a review of the allocation process, informs the group that the final CDBG amount available for allocation is \$109,822. She gives an overview of how the debate over the funding process will work and explains basic ground rules.

The Board had a display of the average ratings of all Public Service applications and the median funding amount proposed from individual Board member's allocations, and colored dots representing each Board member's allocation for each application as follows:

Blue Dot: 75-100% of the amount requested
Green Dot: 50-75% of the amount requested
Yellow Dot: 25-50% of the amount requested
Red Dot: 0-25% of the amount requested

For Budget Balancing Rules: no applications with multiple red dots (0-25% Funding) were to be considered without further debate. No application received multiple red dots. All were eligible for consideration.

Applications were rated by advisory board members in order of the highest average point value to lowest average point value.
They ranked as follows:

PS 5 CVOEO Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program
PS 4 New Arrivals/Sara Holbrook Community Center
PS 1 Lund Early Childhood Program
PS 6 CHC Dental Care Services for Homeless
PS 3 Burlington Police Department Youth Runners
PS 2 Nurse Family Partnership Nurse Home Visiting Program

Russ: Asked what the highest points available are. One member used a 5 point scale rather than a 3 point scale. The scoring was fixed and the overall points were revised. However, the values did not skew the initial rating order and all applications retained their initial position.

Marcy asks if there is any problem with going in order of ranking to review for applications for funding approval. Board offers no objections. Committee begins with review of CVEOE application.

PS 5 CVOEO Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

- CVOEO does a great job of screening program candidates for other services. Offers “one-stop shop” approach.
- CVOEO does a great job of collaborating between multiple organizations
- Offers a great return on investment for initial funding of \$12,000. Great option for low-income population
- Only 50% of participants Burlington residents. Would like to see number higher.
- Organization could put more emphasis on how to be proactive throughout the year and help low-income individuals with tax planning.
- Didn’t do a good enough job reporting results for last year. Not a clear understanding of what the outcomes were from participating in the program last year. Not consistent between how numbers are reported in the application.
- No local data included to show the need for the program.
- How many participants would use tax software instead of a tax preparer to received these services outside of CVOEO services.
- In order to use tax software participants would need access to a computer.
- Would be nice if CVOEO could attract tax preparers who represent the population they serve. Including highly educated members of the New American Population
- Problem with volunteer recruitment. Loss of support from Champlain College class.
- Tax prep volunteer training is a huge commitment of time and resources.
- Is there any mention of translation service or reaching out to Non-English speaking population. Clarification provided that they provide services to different language groups.

Board agrees to vote to approve mean funding for CVOEO: 7-2, approved for \$11,571 after first decision.

PS 4 New Arrivals/Sara Holbrook Community Center

- Program receives funding from United Way
- Program asking for more funding after expanding. No local data available on application.
- Serves the dual purpose of providing educational support as well as summer childcare. Kids also receive meals.
- Problem with program design. Doesn’t agree that ESL children should only work with other ESL students and not a general population of their peers. Professional input into program design and not enough input from community and parents.
- Application is all in bold font. Hard to distinguish question from the answer. Makes the application more difficult for the reviewers.
- Positive that there are pre and post testing during the program; however organization doesn’t provide any context for understanding program results. No real explanation of the expected outcomes of the program and how the reality stacks up to similar efforts.

- Families use this service; however, there is no input from parents about what makes the program effective and why parents would want to send their children to this program. Program has the smallest budget of applicants and yet continues to be successful.
- Knows that the program is successful from firsthand experience and witnessing of program services in action. Would like to see family members included on the organization's board. Would like to know how the organization provides feedback to teachers when students return to school about the work that they have been doing over the summer. Organization is not clear about what measures they use in order to determine student success over the course of the summer. Problem with organization's pay structure.
- Difficulty understanding their budget. The budget was only declared for one year instead of the requested two. Organizational funding really reaching 160 over two years instead of the 80 they were originally reporting.

Board agrees to vote for approval of mean funding. 6-3, first approval at \$18,566.

PS6 CHC Dental Care Services for the Homeless

- Provides background for application. Operated out of Safe Harbor Health Center for homeless residents. Program is applying for one year application funding.
- Looks like a duplication of services. Appearance of already receiving federal funding from another source to provide the same services. Program does not offer a road for truly alleviating poverty. Program would continue without funding
- They get a federal grant however they have to find a match in order to increase funding from other federal grant. Currently serving more people than they have money to serve. Grant money can alleviate poverty or be used to meet basic needs.
- Poverty alleviation aspect of the organization anecdotal and not supported by quantitative data.
- Poor oral hygiene creates other health problems which can affect quality of life and keep someone in a situation of poverty. Didn't do a good enough job of attaching goals to national CDBG objectives.
- Not having data doesn't invalidate the need for the services to be provided.
- Program wording leaves it open to all homeless, including transients and not just local homeless residents.
- Homeless registry count supports that there is a high percentage of unsheltered locals in the area and among the local homeless population. This service is used as an entry point for providing other services to get the homeless off the streets.
- Most dentists do not take members of homeless population. This program is one of the only providers of this service to this population.
- Questions whether the grant would be double dipping given that the organization would continue to provide services with or without getting the grant. States that there are alternative sources available for service in the community. This issue is not a priority. Application was not thorough enough and did not use data analysis to justify the need of existing funding.
- Failed in 2/3 of their goals for grant funding last year. Doesn't do an adequate job of breaking down how the money will be divided and spent between dental care and maintenance goods for survival kits. Without breaking down how the funds will be spent, presents the danger that they will be in line to fail for this grant period.
- Community Health Center receives substantial federal funding.

Vote to approve mean budget: 4-4, no consensus

- Mean funding far under the initial \$12,000 asking
- Propose a \$10,000 grant.

2nd Vote for approval: 5-4, approved \$10,000

PS 1 Early Childhood Program

- Early Childhood program not to be confused with pre-school program
- Definitely serve a community in need. There is a great need for quality childcare and child education.
- Great use of local data in order to prove their need. Concern about program sustainability. No real plan for moving beyond the funding in order to meet needs without grant money.
- Grant money very important for childcare center necessary to fill subsidy gap. Very difficult for childcare centers to plan for sustainability with difficulty of meet subsidy gap.
- Current gap is only 2% of total budget. Is that gap large enough to ensure grant funding. Without 2% children will still be served. Contribution versus per person cost does not match the strengths of the rest of the application.
- 2% could make the difference between family who is no able to meet the copay requirement from being able to attend.
- That 2% need means that the grant isn't critical for services in total. Program finances are sustainable.
- HUD prefers that CDBG funding not be used for a major portion of program funding. Funding from this grant is for salary and operating costs and not necessarily for programmatic needs.
- Lund shows themselves to be a responsible organization. They receive funding from a diverse range of stakeholders.
- Budget vague for determining what salary funding would be used for. Only 47% of participants are residents of Burlington.
- CDBG money looks like leverage money to diversify funding stream and to support future fundraising efforts
- Not enough information about parent support and working with parents to take accountability for their children's success. Childcare support goes beyond education. Need to show steps for supporting long term solutions to childhood poverty.
- Focus on early childhood funding a focus for the year
- Program success and value for the program compares very favorably to children in the public school system. Very cost effective.

Vote on Mean value: 5-4 approved, \$17,143

PS3 Burlington Police Youth Runners

- Most encounters between new Americans and police are negative. This is a great way to change that dynamic and get kids involved and to learn about police activities
- Is this program for this year? Timeframe with May Marathon does not match.
- Clarification, this is for funding for next year's marathon.
- Great idea but not a strong grant application. Perception that these people had never written a grant before.

- Target population Boys and Girls Club. Didn't do a good job of examining similar program models.
- Are they asking for money from the right source? Money being asked for could easily be found from alternative sources.
- In the application, mentioned that they would seek sponsorship and additional funding after receiving start up costs.
- Great data on why this program is appropriate. It's not going to be a reoccurring grant. Set-up costs are important for giving attention to finding sponsors, getting fundraising etc.
- This should be a City priority. This is a program that we want to representative of the City. Great to support police department and the children involved.
- There are pockets of population beyond the Boys and Girls club who could greatly benefit from this program. Asks to expand their reach to include these populations.
- Police have relationship with Boys and Girls Club for past activities trying to curb gang activity.
- Great to see program reach out to other youth populations however for first year starting point Boys and Girls Club have the expertise to appropriately support the development of this sort of program.

Vote for mean funding: \$9757 fail. 2-7

Vote #2: Propose full funding: 6-3, pass \$12,400

- **PS2 Nurse Home Visiting Program** - Maleka Clarke declares conflict from previous employment and abstains from vote and discussion.
- Home visiting is part of Mayor's early childhood initiative.
- Big believer in home visiting model. Organization did a great job of explaining demonstrated need. Proven model for reaching underserved communities.
- Asked for a substantial amount more money than everyone else. What qualified their need for asking for so much more than other programs?
- Group has no experience applying for CDBG so they went for a big amount of money.
- Money for this program is all Federal. No state dollars. Part of larger pilot program across the country.
- Didn't do a good job of providing data for demonstrated need in Burlington. Program is 75% unfunded after this program grant. Not sustainable model. Would be better to evaluate this program by making it contingent on meeting sustainable budget goals.
- Don't have a solid plan for explaining how they plan on reaching their goals. Plan seems insubstantial too much in the planning stages.
- Not enough given to explain how this program has been successfully implemented in other areas of the state.
- Information linked and not included in actual in the application. Made this difficult for the reviewer and didn't click the link.
- Explained the three phased process for implementing successfully the home visit program. Program still has to assess the need and collect specific data for constructing pilot zones and determining services to be offered in Burlington.
- Funding can't be used for the sole purpose of data collection for the project.
- No clarity for how the funding is going to be used and how the money is going to be allocated

- Explained their intention is to hire nurses to conduct home visits to give medical attention and connect families to additional services to support early childhood development
- Funding goes to fund the salary of one Nurse's salary based on calculations. Funding pays for half a nurse's salary per year over a two year period.

Vote on Mean: 3-5, fail at \$41,061

Second vote: \$45,000 6-2 pass

Approved total after first round of voting: \$114, 950, available \$109,822, difference \$5,128

Jane H motions to go to closest vote and revote on funding. Vote passed 7-2.

2nd review PS 6 Dental Care Services

Ben C: Suggests \$8,775, approved

Vote: 6-2

2nd review Lund Early Childhood Program

Tina Proposes \$16,000, approved

Vote: 7-2

2nd review BPD

First proposal to bring it down to average would clear budget deficit. Additional funding sources can be found elsewhere. No vote to remove funding.

2nd review of Nurse Home Visit Program

Proposal to take \$2,220 from Nurse Home Visit Program as lowest scorer.

Vote: 6-3, approved

Reiterate that funding for Home Visiting be contingent on proving program sustainability, ie. other funding.

Additional \$270 remained to bring the allocations into the amount available.

Two proposals considered together. Ben C proposes to take \$270 from BPD. Jen proposes to take it from Nurse Home Visit program

Vote: Approved - Take remaining \$270 from Nurse Home Visit Program bringing final amount to \$42,570.

Approved Funding Value: \$109,822

2015 CDBG Applicants - Public Service				
Proj #	Project/Program	Organization	Amount Requested	Recommended Award
	Child Care & Early Education			
PS1	Lund Early Childhood Program*	Lund	\$20,000	\$16,000
PS2	Nurse Family Partnership Home Visiting Program*	VT Dept. of Health, Div of Maternal & Child Health	\$78,416	\$42,570
	Youth Services			
PS3	Burlington Police Youth Runners*	Burlington Police Department	\$12,400	\$12,400
PS4	New Arrivals*	Sara Holbrook Community Center	\$20,000	\$18,566
	Equal Access and Literacy			
PS5	Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program	Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity	\$12,000	\$11,571
	Health and Public Safety			
PS6	Dental Care Services for Homeless Residents	Community Health Center	\$12,000	\$8,775
	* Two-Year	TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED	\$154,816	\$109,882
		ESTIMATED AMOUNT AVAILABLE	\$109,822	\$109,822
		DIFFERENCE	(\$44,994)	

Plus Delta on meeting

- Rich conversation, not repeat something that others have said
- Good conversations, good attention to the applications
- Orderly procedure
- Group process was good
- Had mind and decision-making process changed
- Productive arguments, finding a method to not verbally affirm an argument
- Good conversation, short or nonverbal agreement form

